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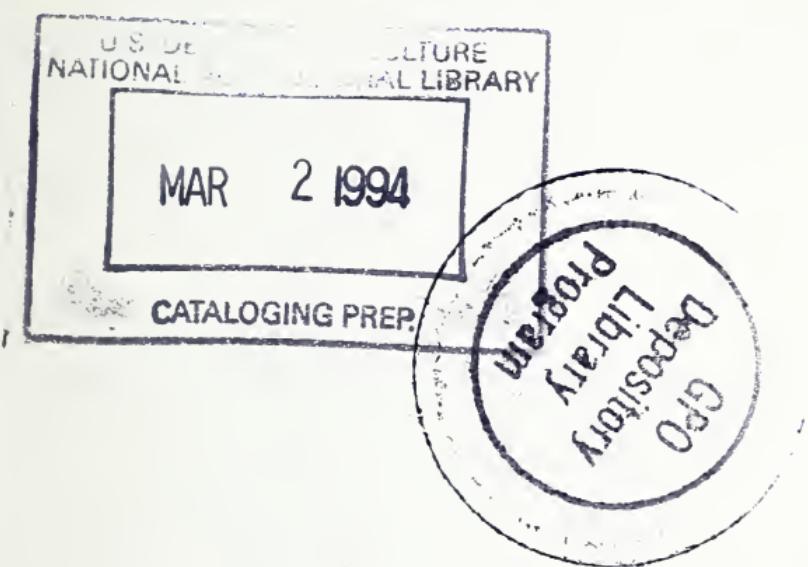


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United States Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Beef Carcass Information Services



How BMIS Works

To incorporate BMIS into a production or marketing program, simply follow the outlined steps prior to the slaughter of any livestock.

To receive BMIS services:

1. Contact the local USDA, AMS, Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch area office and complete an application for service. This should be accomplished at least 2 weeks prior to slaughter. (This is a one-time requirement.)
2. Communicate with the facility where the animals will be slaughtered to ensure that sufficient production time, sufficient cooler space, adequate carcass identification procedures, and all other program requirements will be met to facilitate the data collection.
3. Notify the MGC Branch area office of the number of cattle, tentative slaughter date, location of slaughter facility, and approximate date and time that grading services will be required. To ensure that sufficient grading personnel are available for BMIS activities, timely notification to the MGC Branch area office (not less than 72 hours) is requested.

Upon completion of the data collection, the requested BMIS data will be provided to the applicant by a mutually acceptable means. Applicants will be billed for BMIS services in accordance with an established fee rate schedule.

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BCDS

The Beef Carcass Data Service (BCDS), administered by AMS, is a joint effort of USDA and the livestock and meat industry to facilitate the flow of carcass characteristic data—quality and yield grade factors—to cattle producers and feeders. BCDS is designed to provide accurate data on important value-determining characteristics of the carcass to those producers who were financially interested in the live animal at some point during its development. BCDS information provides producers and feeders a valuable management tool to use in their individual selection and feeding programs.

BCDS provides the following carcass characteristic information on an individual carcass basis:

1. Class (Steer, Heifer, Cow, Bull, Bullock)
2. Maturity (in Thirds)
3. Marbling (in Tenths)
4. Dark Cutting Beef Discount (in Thirds)
5. Quality Grade (in Thirds)
6. Adjusted Preliminary Yield Grade (in Tenths)
7. Ribeye Area (in Square Inches)
8. Percentage of Kidney, Pelvic, and Heart Fat
9. Warm Carcass Weight in Pounds (not Verified)
10. Final Yield Grade

How BCDS Works

Identification of cattle for the BCDS program will be by means of specially designed eartags applied by users of the service to those cattle on which they want to obtain carcass information. After slaughter and carcass preparation, USDA meat graders will evaluate carcasses identified with the BCDS eartags and record the individual quality and yield characteristic data. The carcass data is then transmitted back to the user.

Persons planning to use BCDS should realize that the purchase of an eartag does not guarantee that carcass data will be received on every animal. Eartags may be lost—either prior to or during the slaughter process—or removed at any time during production, feeding, and marketing processes. Since the charge for this service is not made until the completed data form is received, the only cost in the event of a lost eartag is the price of the eartag.

Feeder calf producers should keep in mind that most cattle today are slaughtered at 16 to 24 months of age. Thus, the calf producer may not receive the carcass report for several months after the animal is sold.

Under the BCDS program, USDA has entered into cooperative agreements with various State agencies and beef associations to act as distributors of BCDS eartags and final carcass data reports. Producers interested in this service should contact a local cooperator regarding BCDS operating procedures, the price of eartags, data reports, and total cost per head.

If additional information on BMIS or BCDS services—including the location of a BCDS cooperator or an MGC Branch area office—is needed, please contact the USDA, AMS, MGC Branch headquarters office at the following address:

USDA, AMS, Livestock and Seed Division
Meat Grading and Certification Branch
P.O. Box 96456
Room 2638-S
Washington, DC 20090-6456

Phone: 202/720-1246

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With today's rapidly expanding world markets and shifting consumer preferences, producers, feeders, meat packers, and others in the livestock and meat industry must promptly and efficiently respond to the demands of the marketplace. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Beef Marketing Information Service (BMIS) and Beef Carcass Data Service (BCDS) are two valuable tools that can be used to meet these demands . . . But, which is best for you?

BMIS

The Beef Marketing Information Service (BMIS), administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), is specifically designed for feeders and others in the industry who buy and sell cattle on a carcass grade or yield basis. BMIS, by providing carcass characteristic information on a lot basis, will enhance the development and support of a value-based marketing program.

BMIS provides the following (on a lot basis):

1. Gross Hot Carcass Weight
2. Quality Grade
3. Yield Grade
4. Number of Carcasses Quality Grade
Discounted for Dark Cutting Condition
5. Number of Carcasses Ineligible for
Grading Due to Exhibiting Calloused or
Bloodshot Conditions

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